(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) A few complaints of poor quality of food served in trains have been reported. Action like, counselling, imposition of fine and termination of contracts etc. are taken on complaints found substantiated. Regular checks and inspections are carried out by the officials of zonal railways and Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation.

Plantation of trees along railway tracks

†121. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated any plan to plant trees on both the sides of railway lines passing through the cities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this plan has been finalized;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of the progress made in this regard till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. There is no specific scheme for plantation of trees on either side of Railway lines in cities. Railways have a general policy for doing plantation on vacant land.

(b) to (e) Do no arise.

Railway line in Meghalaya

122. SHRI THOMAS SANGMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to introduce any railway line in the State of Meghalaya;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The new line projects taken up in the State are: (i) Dudhnoi-Mendipather (19.75 km.), cost Rs. 89 crore and (ii) Azara-Byrnihat (30 km.), cost Rs. 2.50 crore.

(c) Does not arise.

Setting up of bulk terminals under public private partnership mode

123. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether with a view to upgrade freight business, his Ministry proposes to set up bulk terminals under Public Private partnership mode;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are the details of such terminals that are proposed to be set up on the ECoR system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. At present no such scheme for setting up of bulk terminals under Public Private Partnership mode is available.

(c) Does not arise.

Casualties due to fire in Gautami Express

124. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of passengers burnt alive when Secunderabad-Kakinada Gautami Express caught fire near Warangal in Andhra Pradesh as reported in all the newspapers dated 2 August, 2008;

(b) if so, the exact number of casualties held and preliminary investigations into the cause of the accident have been ascertained;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to prevent such accidents of trains in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) (i) 31 passengers died due to fire in Gautami Express on 01.08.2008.

(ii) Commissioner for Railway Safety, Secunderabad has conducted statutory enquiry into the cause of fire. He has passed following remarks in his preliminary report—

(1) The fire in the coaches of Train No. 2738 Gautami Express between Kesamudram-Tadalapusalapalli Railway stations in Kazipet-Vijayawada double line, Broad-Gauge electrified section of Secunderabad Division of South Central Railway appears to be due to some unidentified highly combustible substance (in liquid or solid form) present in the S-10 coach, which was kept there by some unidentified person or persons while the train was running at a speed of 75 kilometers per hour, the fire appeared to have originated from the floor level, at Nekkonda.

(2) The accident falls under the Category "failure of person/persons other than Railway staff".

(iii) Government Railway Police/Warangal have also registered a case vide CR No.191/2008 under classification-accidental fire and under section 174 of the Criminal Procedure Code dated 01.08.2008. It is under investigation with the Deputy Superintendent/Railway Police.